



CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES
Office of the Medical Officer of Health

TO:	Mayor and Members Board of Health
COMMITTEE DATE:	March 20, 2023
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	2023 PHS Annual Service Plan & Budget Submission (BOH23011) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Nancy Sullivan (905) 546-2424 Ext. 5752
SUBMITTED BY:	Dr. Elizabeth Richardson, MD, MHSc, FRCPC Medical Officer of Health Public Health Services
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the Medical Officer of Health be directed to submit the 2023 Annual Service Plan and Budget to the Ministry of Health, in keeping with what is outlined in Board of Health Report (BOH23011);
- (b) That the Board of Health reiterate their call to the Ministry of Health to fully fund the provincial portion, at least 70%, of the total costs of the mandatory public health programs and services provided under the Ontario Public Health Standards;
- (c) That the Board of Health reiterate their call to the Ministry of Health to continue the current mitigation funding until such time as the cost-shared arrangement is restored to 75%/25% for all cost-shared programs and that the Province once again assumes 100% funding for those programs identified as such in the public health budget for 2018-2019; and,
- (d) That the Board of Health call on the Ministry of Health to include expectations for on-going COVID-19 response in the Ontario Public Health Standards and provide permanent funding to sustain these requirements.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ontario Public Health Standards set the minimum requirements for public health programs and services for boards of health across the province, targeting the prevention of disease, health promotion and protection, and community health

surveillance. Each year Public Health Services (PHS) develops the Annual Service Plan and Budget (ASPB) that describes Hamilton's plans for the delivery of programs and services in accordance with the Ontario Public Health Standards, based on local needs and budgets at the program level. Approval and submission of the ASPB to the Ministry of Health is required to receive provincial funding to support the delivery of public health programs and services under the Standards.

In January 2023, Public Health Services leadership provided an overview of Hamilton's population health assessment, priority population health needs, and priority Public Health Services action areas to address the population health needs (refer to Board of Health Report (BOH23002)). Public Health Services has identified four priority population health needs: (1) child and youth healthy growth and development; (2) climate change; (3) health equity; and, (4) mental health and substance use. These priority population health needs are not new but are enduring priorities that have been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. They represent areas of work that require focus and attention in planning and resourcing in order to achieve significant gains. Public Health Services has identified specific public health priority actions that will be implemented to adapt and improve existing programs and services to contribute to addressing these population health needs.

While the overall Public Health Services budget was presented within the Healthy and Safe Communities Department report and budget presentation at the January 26, 2023 General Issues Committee Meeting, specific highlights are made in the financial section of this report related to the ASPB. The expenditures related to the ASPB represent 85% or \$61.5M of the total Public Health Services gross budget. Public Health Services anticipates \$48.6M in provincial subsidies and fees. The resulting net levy impact of the 2023 ASPB is \$12.9M or a 6.7% increase over 2022.

Alternatives for Consideration – Not Applicable

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: Approval of the 2023 ASPB and submission to the Ministry of Health is required to receive provincial funding to support the delivery of public health programs and services under the Ontario Public Health Standards. The 2023 ASPB Submission template is due to the Ministry of Health on April 3, 2023. The Province does not give local public health agencies specific targets for developing their ASPB, but has given some guidance as to expected subsidy for this year, which has been incorporated into this Board of Health Report (BOH23011). If there are further updates from the province, staff will update the Board of Health at a subsequent meeting. Final provincial subsidy grants will not be known until funding letters are received later this year.

The overall Public Health Services budget was presented within the Healthy and Safe Communities (HSC) report and budget presentation at the January 26, 2023 General Issues Committee Meeting. Appendix “A” to Board of Health Report (BOH23011) provides an overview of the Public Health Services budget, ASPB gross expenditures, and funding sources. The expenditures related to the ASPB represent 85% or \$61.5M of the total Public Health Services budget (refer to Graphs 1 and 2 of Appendix “A” to Board of Health Report (BOH23011)). The following summarizes the details of the ASPB 2023 budgeted expenditures (see Graphs 3 and 4 of Appendix “A” to Board of Health Report (BOH23011)).

In 2020 the Province directed a shift from a mixed 75%/25% and 100% funding model to a 70%/30% Provincial/Municipal funding formula for all public health programs and services under the Ontario Public Health Standards (Mandatory Programs), except the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program (OSDCP) which remains 100% provincially funded. The Ministry of Health provided one-time mitigation funding in 2020, 2021, and 2022 to keep levy increases below 10% of existing costs and has committed to continue this mitigation funding in 2023. In 2022, the Ministry of Health provided a 1% increase in base funding, an increase of \$267,300. It is anticipated that the Ministry of Health will hold Public Health Services at the same funding level in 2023. The anticipated Mandatory Programs base funding in 2023 is \$26,992,700 and \$2,215,800 of one-time mitigation funding. The 2023 ASPB Mandatory Programs budget is \$42,074,414¹ and due to increased costs of inflation includes an increase to base expenditures of \$798,524 or 1.9% increase from 2022. After applying anticipated provincial funding, the net levy impact of the 2023 ASPB is \$12,865,914 or a 6.7% increase over 2022. The anticipated OSDCP funding in 2023 is \$4,226,500.

The 2023 COVID-19 estimated cost is currently \$14,001,965, which includes the COVID-19 Vaccine program (\$7,279,767), COVID-19 General Program (\$5,515,478), and COVID-19 School-Focused Nurses (SFN) Initiative (\$1,206,721). The Ministry of Health has communicated that funding for the COVID-19 School Focused Nurses Initiative will be extended for the remainder of the current school year until June 2023. In addition, health units continue to be eligible for reimbursement of all extraordinary COVID-19 related costs over and above ASPB subsidized expenditures in 2023.

¹ Mandatory Programs Gross Expenditures (\$43,035,051) less Fees & General (\$0.96M).

As part of the ASPB, the Ministry of Health also considers requests for additional one-time funding for extraordinary costs. For 2023, Public Health Services plans to request one-time funding at 100% for:

1. Public Health Inspector Practicum Program:

Request \$10,000 to hire Public Health Inspector Trainees for program support and to provide future Public Health Inspectors with training and hands-on field experience. This funding has been in place for many years and must be requested annually;

2. Smoke Free Ontario (SFO) Enforcement Tablet Upgrades:

Request \$3,600 for the purchase of tablets to support the Tobacco Inspection System software for mobile units;

3. Needles Syringes Program:

Request \$51,000 to support the expansion of the needle syringe kiosk program. Currently the community demand for bins, and the required staffing to empty the bins exceeds the base budget available of the program. Public Health Services is requesting one-time funding to increase the availability of kiosks and capacity to maintain the bins in 2023;

4. Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program:

Request \$20,000 to address ongoing challenges with Information Technology (IT) components and systems on the Seniors Dental Health Bus. The Ministry of Health has communicated that there may also be an opportunity to apply for increased 100% funding for the OSDCP to address on-going operational costs, Public Health Services will apply for \$156,030 in additional operational funding; and,

5. ASPB Base Funding Shortfall:

Request \$2,347,310 to address the 2023 ASPB Base Funding shortfall. The current ASPB base funding is based on 2018 Q3 costs. There has only been one increase to the funding since that time; a 1% base funding increase was received in 2022. With the increased cost of inflation to our mandatory programs in wages, benefits and operating costs, as well as new and expanded requirements added to the Ontario Public Health Standards without new funding (i.e., Vision Screening Protocol; Menu Labelling Protocol; Inspection of Private Swimming Pools; *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* inspections and enforcement; and, Response to Inspection Prevention & Control Complaints), 75% of our total cost for programs that fall under the Standards amounts to \$31,555,811 in 2023. This represents a shortfall of \$2,347,310 in comparison to the \$29,208,500 anticipated funding

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for 2023. Ideally the Province will increase base funding to address these costs, but in the absence of increased base funding, Public Health Services is requesting one-time funding to mitigate these pressures in 2023.

If further adjustments are made to programs covered by the ASPB through the ongoing City budget process, these will be submitted through the regular quarterly reports to the Ministry of Health.

Staffing: Overall staffing levels for Public Health Services, including the ASPB program, are addressed in the Healthy and Safe Communities Department report and budget presentation at the January 26, 2023 General Issues Committee Meeting.

In the 2023 ASPB, total staffing is 473.85 FTEs, a decrease of 199.55 FTEs in comparison to 2022. The decrease is mainly attributed to COVID-19; staffing has decreased from 124.35 FTE in 2022 to 53.00 FTE in 2023 for the COVID-19 General Program; from 116.00 FTE in 2022 to 70.00 FTE in 2023 for the COVID-19 Vaccine Program; and from 23.00 FTE in 2022 to 22.5 FTE in 2023 for the School-Focused Nurses (SFN) Initiative. There are no FTE changes in base ASPB mandatory programs, it remains at 302.39 FTE. The FTE for the OSDCP program has decreased by 0.2 FTE, from 26.00 FTE in 2022 to 25.80 FTE in 2023.

Legal: The Ministry of Health expects boards of health to be accountable for meeting all requirements included in legislation and the documents that operationalize them. It is a requirement within the Ontario Public Health Standards that boards of health submit an ASPB each year. Approval and submission of the 2023 ASPB to the Ministry fulfils this requirement.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As of 2018, the Ontario Public Health Standards require that all boards of health approve and submit an ASPB to the Ministry of Health each year. The purpose of the ASPB is for boards of health to communicate their program plans and budgeted expenditures for a given year. Information provided in the ASPB describes the programs and services boards of health are planning to deliver in accordance with the Ontario Public Health Standards, based on local needs and budgets at the program level.

The ASPB lays out an assessment of the population health needs in Hamilton, priority areas for action, detailed program plans, budgeted expenditures, and requests for base and one-time funding.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The Ontario Public Health Standards outline requirements that direct the delivery of mandatory public health programs and services by public health units pursuant to the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*. It is a requirement within the Standards that boards of health submit an ASPB each year to the Ministry of Health.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

Finance and Administration has been consulted regarding the preparation of the ASPB.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Ontario Public Health Standards set the minimum requirements for public health programs and services for boards of health across the province, targeting the prevention of disease, health promotion and protection, and community health surveillance. In accordance with the Ontario Public Health Standards, Public Health Services provides a broad range of programs and services in the areas of chronic disease prevention, mental health and well-being, substance use and injury prevention, school health, healthy growth and development, healthy environments, food and water safety, immunization and infectious disease prevention and control, as well as foundational programs that underlie and support all programs and services. The 2023 ASPB describes Hamilton's plans for the delivery of programs and services in accordance with the Ontario Public Health Standards, based on local needs and budgets at the program level.

In 2022, Public Health Services began the work of transitioning from the COVID-19 emergency response to sustained monitoring, prevention and response. This involved integrating COVID-19 work into existing Public Health Services programs (i.e., Infectious Disease and Vaccine Programs). As part of this transition, staff who were deployed to support the COVID-19 emergency response returned to their home programs at the end of April 2022. Since that time, Public Health Services has re-opened programs and services in a prioritized way and enhanced some service levels to address the deficits of care and backlog of services due to COVID-19. In all program areas, staff have developed program objectives and plans that meet the needs of the local population, as well as ensure compliance with the Ontario Public Health Standards.

In parallel, Public Health Services leadership identified priorities for 2023-2026, which represent areas of work that require focus and attention in planning and resourcing in order to achieve significant gains. Population health needs for Hamilton were identified through a review of the 2018 Health Check report, as well as emerging evidence on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health of communities. In January 2023, Public Health Services provided an overview of Hamilton's population health

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assessment, priority population health needs and priority Public Health Services action areas to address the population health needs (refer to Board of Health Report (BOH23002)). Public Health Services has identified four priority population health needs: child and youth healthy growth and development; climate change; health equity; and, mental health and substance use. The following paragraphs provide an overview of the specific public health priority actions that will be implemented to adapt and improve existing programs and services to address these population health needs.

Public Health Services contributes to improving child and youth healthy growth and development with actions throughout the early years:

- In the perinatal period (pregnancy to 12 months post-partum), Public Health Services will focus on providing programs and service that support the healthiest start in life through prenatal education, early identification of individuals at risk for poor mental health and facilitating access to a range of community supports and support for breastfeeding;
- In the infant and early years period, Public Health Services will focus on addressing mental health by reducing the number of children age 0-6 years at risk for poor social and emotional development through education, early identification and facilitating access to community supports; and,
- Public Health Services will support school-age children through school-based interventions, such as enhanced school dental screenings and immunization clinics to address deficits of care resulting from pandemic, and universal school supports and intensive services to priority schools.

Public Health Services' climate change focus and work supports and is aligned with the City of Hamilton Climate Change Impact and Adaptation Plan (CHCCIP). The priority action areas described here represent public health actions that are mandated in the Ontario Public Health Standards and align with the City's overarching plan for climate change action. To contribute to mitigating the impacts of climate change Public Health Standards will focus on the following priority action areas:

- Extreme heat and health by coordinating local efforts to address excessive indoor temperatures in rental housing and identifying ways to expand cooling programming and interventions across Hamilton;
- Vector borne disease (VBD) by coordinating and working with partners to ensure vulnerable groups understand and have the means to be adequately protected from VBD;
- Data for climate change health impacts by developing and implementing a plan to establish an ongoing weather-related health event monitoring system for the City of Hamilton that works towards more real-time communication; and,
- Supporting the Climate Change Office and others across the City in the development of climate/health promotional material, education/ awareness through research and identification of existing communication channels to priority and at-risk populations.

Public Health Services will continue to contribute to improving health equity by focusing on the following four priority action areas:

- Increasing staff competency to improve equitable health outcomes in Public Health Services programs and services;
- Using data, including measures of health inequities, to inform program planning and priorities;
- Community collaboration, particularly with priority populations; and,
- Increasing communication and awareness about local health inequities to drive collective action.

To contribute to improving mental health and mitigating the impacts of substance use Public Health Services will focus on the following four priority action areas:

- Implementing an organizational approach to Trauma and Violence Informed Care;
- Collaborating with City and community partners to promote mental well-being, resilience and prevent substance use in youth;
- Leading the review and update the 2011 Municipal Alcohol Policy in collaboration with City departments, and collaborating with community stakeholders and other public health units to apply to Health Canada to decriminalize the personal possession of illegal substances; and,
- Coordinating and implementing interventions to support safer substance use and decrease adverse events from individuals using alone.

In October 2021, the previous Board of Health joined a number of other boards to request additional ongoing financial support for public health units. Specifically, support was requested to relieve the following financial pressures: (1) resources required to address deficits of care; (2) increased wage, benefit and operational costs due to inflation; (3) new and expanded programs that were added to the Ontario Public Health Standards; (4) increased demand for public health services to support community pandemic recovery; and, (5) continued support for COVID-19 response. In 2022, the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHA) submitted a report to the provincial government to further demonstrate the need for additional investments in public health required to clear the service backlog, resume routine programs and services, and maintain an effective pandemic response.² Recently, as part of their 2023 pre-budget submission, alPHA re-iterated their call to the Province to immediately revert to the 75%/25% provincial-municipal public health cost-sharing formula, along with a pledge to continue 100% funding for programs that have been traditionally underwritten by the

² Association of Local Public Health Agencies (2022). Public Health Resilience in Ontario: Clearing the Backlog, Resuming Routine Programs, and Maintaining an Effective COVID-19 Response.

[https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.alphaweb.org/resource/collection/822EC60D-0D03-413E-B590-AFE1AA8620A9/alPHA PH Resilience Report Final Jan2022.pdf](https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.alphaweb.org/resource/collection/822EC60D-0D03-413E-B590-AFE1AA8620A9/alPHA_PH_Resilience_Report_Final_Jan2022.pdf)

Province.³ In Hamilton, even with the mitigation funding, the anticipated provincial subsidy will only be approximately 70% of the total costs in 2023. With the mitigation funding expected to end in 2023, Public Health Services will have substantial cost pressures in 2024 and beyond (refer to Graph 5 in Appendix “A” of Board of Health Report (BOH23011)). alPHa also called on the Ministry of Health to include language in the public health mandate (i.e., the Ontario Public Health Standards) and permanent funding to sustain on-going public health efforts related to COVID-19 that are expected to become routine, such as vaccination and outbreak control.²

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

Not Applicable.

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Healthy and Safe Communities

Hamilton is a safe and supportive City where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.

Our People and Performance:

Hamiltonians have a high level of trust and confidence in their City government.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report BOH23011

Summary of 2023 Public Health Services
Budget for Ministry of Health Funded
Programs Under the Ontario Public Health
Standards

³ Association of Local Public Health Agencies (2023). Letter to the Honourable Peter Bethlenfalvy, MPP, Minister of Finance, Re: 2023 Pre-Budget Submission: Public Health Programs and Services.

https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.alphaweb.org/resource/collection/8732D26A-679B-4AB9-9C50-532E0CC3A278/alPHa_Submission_Pre_Budget_2023_140223.pdf